

November 18, 2003

Kent Morgan  
Assistant Director, Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department  
555 South 10<sup>th</sup> Street  
Suite 213  
Lincoln, NE 68508

Dear Kent:

Thank you for your inquiry regarding local statistics of children walking or biking to school. I have shared your request with Mike Heyl, coordinator of the Lincoln on the Move Program, which is a part of the LLCHD and collaborates with various physical activity efforts in our community.

Mike and I believe that the information that Patte Newman was referencing from the Walk to School event that was held at Pershing Elementary School on October 8<sup>th</sup> are national statistics. Currently, there is no comprehensive local data for child pedestrian rates for walking or biking to school. There have been a couple of small projects related to "Walking School Bus" projects that the Lincoln on the Move program has developed, but nothing close to a community wide survey. The two "Walking School Bus" projects suggested that approximately 15-20% of children at Elliot and at Pershing Elementary Schools walked or rode bikes to school which would be similar to national statistics.

There has been discussion of a possible effort between LLCHD and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Health and Human Performance program regarding the assigning of students at several elementary schools in the city that would serve internships promoting the "Walking School Bus" concept and that would provide us with an opportunity to measure walking and biking rates at several schools as a baseline for comparison to national trends and to measure changes that a "Walking School Bus" program could make on physical activity levels as well as traffic volumes around schools and changes in air quality around schools. Should the discussion lead into a pilot project, we would be happy to share any and all data with you and your department.

There are several websites where information regarding rates of walking and biking to school can be found. We have used the following websites to gather information:

[www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/study](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/study)

[www.americabikes.org](http://www.americabikes.org) (Go to "safe routes to school")

[www.bikewalk.org](http://www.bikewalk.org)

There is also a section of the Healthy People 2010 (Chapter 22 on Physical Activity) objectives that address walking and biking and offers some baseline data to set goals from. It can be found at <http://wonder.cdc.gov/data2010>

The LLCHD does maintain a database on pedestrian and pedacycle injury. If this type of information would be helpful, please let me know.

Please let Mike or myself know if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Brian Baker  
441-8046

Michael Heyl  
441-3889